

Sometimes, even your friends **let the cat out of the bag**.



Exercise 1

Match phrases 1–8 with A–H to make idioms from this unit.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. go off at | A. the beg |
| 2. get your wires | B. base |
| 3. to be | C. a tangent |
| 4. keep someone | D. the beans |
| 5. spill | E. the picture |
| 6. touch | F. posted |
| 7. let the cat out of | G. at cross purposes |
| 8. put someone in | H. crossed |

Exercise 2

Complete the sentences with the words in the boxes. Some of the sentences have more than one answer.

out

from

at

in

off

on

1. Keep me _____ the loop, will you?



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out

from

at

in

off

on

2. I wish she wouldn't keep going off ____ a tangent.
3. We heard a rumor ____ the grapevine.
4. Let me put you ____ the picture.
5. I heard all this straight ____ the horse's mouth.
6. I think they were arguing ____ cross purposes there.
7. She promised me she wouldn't let the cat ____ of the bag.
8. She really came ____ of her shell when the signing started.

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Exercise 3

Reorder the phrases to make sentences.

1. true / it must be / here **in black and white** / because it's
2. as you develop / keep me / the idea / **in the loop**
3. every week to / **touch base** / we meet / have lunch and
4. was moving / that the discussion / **off on a tangent** / I thought
5. she was doing / she asked him / on how / **to keep her posted**
6. paid / the office cleaner to / the newspaper reporter / **spill the beans**
7. the issue of / **find common ground** on / they managed to / rates of pay
8. going away / the family agreed that / would **bring him out of his shell** / to university

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Exercise 4

Make sentences 1-6 less formal. Replace the underlined words with the correct idioms A-F.

1. I haven't heard any news yet, but I'll inform you.
2. It was meant to be a surprise, but someone gave the secret away.
3. I heard a rumor that Penny and Alan are getting married.
4. It must be true. I heard it from a reliable source.
5. Let's meet up next week just to make contact again.
6. They support different teams but they agreed with each other when someone mentioned the off-side rule.

A. **let the cat out of the bag**

B. **heard on the grapevine**

C. **keep you posted**

D. **found common ground**

E. **heard it straight from the horse's mouth**

F. **touch base**

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The Answer

Exercise 1

1. **C** - 2. **H** - 3. **G** - 4. **F**
5. **D** - 6. **B** - 7. **A** - 8. **E**

Exercise 3

1. It must be true because it's here **in black and white**.
2. Keep me **in the loop** as you develop the idea.
3. We meet every week to have lunch and **touch base**.
4. I thought that the discussion was moving **off on a tangent**.
5. She asked him **to keep her posted** on how she was doing.
6. The newspaper reporter paid the office cleaner to **spill the beans**.
7. They managed to **find common ground** on the issue of rates of pay.
8. The family agreed that going away to university would **bring him out of his shell**.

Exercise 2

1. **in** the loop
2. going off **at** a tangent
3. heard a rumor **on** the grapevine
4. put you **in** the picture
5. **from** the horse's mouth
6. **at** cross purposes
7. let the cat **out** of the bag
8. came **out** of her shell

Exercise 4

1. **C** - 2. **A** - 3. **B** - 4. **E**
5. **F** - 6. **D**